164. Playing blackjack

By Ron Klinger

Dealer West : East-West vulnerable

North ▲ 432 ♥ KJ75 ◆ A4 ♣ J953			
South ▲ AKQ10 ♥ Q83 ♦ Q10 ♣ AQ7	9		
West Pass Pass Pass (1) 19-20 p (2) 5 spade		East Pass Pass All Pass	South 2NT ⁽¹⁾ 3♠ ⁽²⁾

West leads the \checkmark 2: five – ace – eight. East returns the \checkmark 4: queen – \bigstar 5 – \checkmark 7. West switches to the \bigstar J. Plan the play.

Make up your mind before reading further.

This was yesterday's problem:

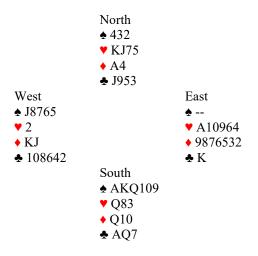
Dealer West : East-West vulnerable

	North		
West ▲ J8765 ♥ 2			
◆ KJ ◆ 108642			
West	North	East	South
Pass	Pass	Pass	2NT ⁽¹⁾
Pass	3♣	Pass	3 ♠ ⁽²⁾
Pass	4♥	All Pass	
(1) 19-20 poin	nts		
(2) 5 spades			

West leads the \checkmark 2: five – ace – eight. East returns the \checkmark 4: queen – \bigstar 5 – \checkmark 7.

What would you play as West at trick 3?

The deal comes from a game on BBO in July, with Australian stars, Sartaj Hans West and Avi Kanetkar East.



After $\diamond 2$ to the $\diamond A$ and the $\diamond 4$ return, ruffed by West, yesterday's problem asked, What would you play as West at trick 3?. Hans (W) switched to the $\diamond J$. Fearful of another ruff, declarer rose with dummy's $\diamond A$ and played $\diamond A$, $\diamond K$, $\diamond Q$, $\diamond 10$ to West's $\diamond J$. West cashed the $\diamond K$ for one down.

After trick 2, declarer could have made 4. three different ways:

(a) Duck the \bullet J. East's \P 4 return was suit-preference for clubs. Why would West switch to a diamond when East asked for a club? Furthermore, why would East ask for a club return when the \clubsuit K was no sure trick, while the \bullet K over the \bullet A would be a trick? With the \bullet K, East would have returned the \P 10 at trick 2.

(b) Take the A and play a low club at once, finessing the Q if East plays low. This would eliminate a club loser if East began with K-x. When East follows with the K, South wins, plays A, K, Q, Q. Finesse Q and the J allows South to pitch the Q.

Why did West switch to the \bullet J when East's \bullet 4 was suit-preference for clubs? Because West did not need another heart ruff. Still holding \bullet J-8-7-6, West was assured of another spade trick. If East did have the \bullet A, the defence could always collect it later. If East did not have the \bullet A, then the \bullet J might persuade declarer to rise with the \bullet A to escape another heart ruff. South was unaware yet of the bad spade break.

Problem for Tomorrow:

Dealer North : Both vulnerable

West	North	East	South
	Pass	2 ♠ ⁽¹⁾	2NT ⁽²⁾
Pass	?		

(1) 6 spades, 6-10 points

(2) 15-18 points, balanced, at least one spade stopper

What would you do as North with:

▲ 8
♥ AJ93
◆ 983
◆ J10865

Why not phone or email your bridge partners and compare your answers and your reasoning?

Ever wonder why the word 'funeral' starts with FUN?

New book: *The Power of Pass* (by Harold Schogger and Ron Klinger). \$A25.00 Available from Suzie Klinger, post free until 2021: email <u>suzie@ronklingerbridge.com</u> or telephone 0411 229 705.